

## Criticise but don't break law, PM tells TMJ

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad took a swipe at Johor crown prince Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim yesterday, reminding him that he could always criticise the government like an ordinary citizen as long he did not break the law.

Mahathir said Tunku Ismail was not above the law and the government never prevented any citizen of Malaysia from expressing his or her opinion on its administration.

"He can always make remarks like a normal ordinary person. He can criticise the government as long he doesn't go above the law," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby.

"If he makes statements that are deemed seditious, then we will take action against him. He is not above the law and no one in Malaysia is above the law."

Mahathir also pointed out that the government had never stopped any Malaysian

from expressing their opinion.

"He is a citizen of Malaysia and nothing more or less than that," he said.

The prime minister was responding to questions posed by reporters on the criticisms hurled by the Johor crown prince against the government for wanting to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and for announcing a ship-to-ship transfer hub in the southern state.

In an immediate response, Tunku Ismail said he was ready to face any criminal action if he has indeed made any seditious remarks.

"Please do. If I have to go down for upholding the Constitution, the Malay Rulers and Islam. By all means. You know where to find me.

"Like a normal citizen, I have the right to ask questions and give my opinion. I'm all yours. Finish what you start," he said in a tweet.